

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached two (2) sheets of drawings include changes to FIGS. 1 and 2. These sheets, which include FIGS. 1 and 2, replace the sheets currently in the application which contain FIGS. 1 and 2. Replacement of the sheets containing FIGS. 1 and 2 with the sheets filed herewith is requested. Also filed are two sheets of drawings showing the changes made to FIGS. 1 and 2.

Attachment: Two (2) Replacement Drawing Sheets and two (2) drawing sheets showing the changes made to the drawings.

REMARKS

Claims 1-23 are pending in this application as set forth in the Amendment A filed May 10, 2006. Claims 3, 6, 12 and 15 have been withdrawn.

In this amendment, Claims 1-16 and 20 have been canceled without prejudice to filing a continuation with respect thereto.

Claims 17, 21 and 22 have been amended.

Claims 18, 19, and 23 are unchanged.

Claim 24 has been added.

Amendment To The Drawings

Upon review of the drawings filed with the prior amendment, Applicants' undersigned attorney noted discrepancies between the drawings filed and the original drawings filed with the application. The amendments to FIGS. 1 and 2 correct these errors. These corrections include typographical errors in the reference numbers and the correction of lines which should have been shown as threaded, but were shown as straight lines. The changes to the drawings do not add new matter to the application.

Amendment To The Specification

The specification has been amended, as noted above, to provide support in the specification for claim language that was inserted in the prior amendment. In particular, paragraph [0032] has been amended to provide that the terms "retention member", and "piston head" are alternative names for the sleeve tube 62 and the closed upper end 64-2 of the piston element 64. In addition, the tubular piston element 64 is defined as having "a piston skirt" with a lower open end 64-1. These elements can all be seen in FIG. 2, and thus do not add new matter to the application.

Amendment to the Claims

In the office action, the Examiner rejected Claims 10-11 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being obvious over Mears (US409217) in view of Lloyd et al (US1136606). Claims 13 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Mears (US409217) in view of Lloyd et al (US1136606), and further in view of Follett (US3645586). Claim 16 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Mears (US409217) in view of Lloyd et al (US1136606), and further in view of Nottingham (US160459). Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Mears (US409217) in view of Lloyd et al (US1136606), and further in view of Fairlamb (US4527587). Claims 4, 5, 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Mears (US409217) in view of Lloyd et al (US1136606) and Fairlamb (US4527587) and further in view of Follett (US3645586). Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Mears (US409217) in view of Lloyd et al (US1136606) and Fairlamb and further in view of Nottingham (US160459).

As noted above, Claims 1-16 have been canceled without prejudice to filing a continuation with respect thereto. In cancelling Claims 1-16, Applicants are not admitting that noted references render the claims unpatentable. Rather, Claims 1-16 have been canceled in order to expedite the examination of the application.

Claims 17-19, 21 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Mears (US409217) in view of Follett (US3645586), and further in view of Holicer (US2536244). Lastly, Claim 22 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Mears (US409217) in view of Follett (US3645586), and Holicer

(US2536244), and further in view of Nottingham (US160459). As discussed below, in view of the amendment to Claim 17, this rejection is believed to be moot.

The Examiner noted that Claim 20 was objected to as depending from a rejected base claim. Claim 20 depended directly from independent Claim 17, and Claim 17 has been amended to substantially incorporate the subject matter of Claim 20. Claim 20 has been canceled without prejudice to filing of a continuation with respect thereto. The subject matter appended to the end of Claim 17 is not identical to the subject matter of Claim 20, and the differences between original claim 20 and the subject matter appended to claim 17 are set forth below.

[[A tap according to Claim 17,]] wherein said piston element comprises a piston head engageable with said check valve seat and a piston skirt extending from said piston head towards said free opposite end of said retention member, the outer diameter of which being smaller than the inner diameter of the sleeve tube, said piston skirt being guided for axial movement in the retention member sleeve tube in an inner annular shoulder thereof the sleeve tube and by an outer annular flange of said piston skirt element, that a said check valve biasing spring is being disposed about said piston skirt between said shoulder and said flange, and that said piston skirt has having a hollow interior having a closed at a first closed end thereof by said piston head, said piston skirt hollow interior being in fluid communication with the interior of the retention member at for engagement with the check valve seat, a second opposite open end of the piston skirt in communication with the sleeve tube interior, and by at least one orifice through the piston skirt element between the closed first end and the flange of the piston skirt element.

The amendment to the subject matter of claim 20 does not add new matter to the application. Additionally, Applicant submits that the changes to the subject matter of Claim 20 (which has been incorporated in Claim 17) maintain the features which distinguish over the references of record. Claim 17 is thus believed to be in condition

for allowance. Claims 18, 19 and 21-23 all depend from Claim 17 and are also believed to be allowable.

New Claim 24 has been added. New Claim 24 depends from Claim 17 and provides that "a sealing ring is disposed in an annular groove of the outer annular flange of the piston element." The sealing ring is shown in FIG. 2 in the groove of flange 68 as described at the end of amended paragraph [0032]. Inasmuch as Claim 24 includes subject matter that is readily seen from the drawings, new Claim 24 does not add new matter to the application. Claim 24 is believed to be allowable in view of its dependence from Claim 17.

In view of the forgoing, Applicants submit that Claims 17-19 and 21-24 are in condition for allowance. Issuance of a notice of allowability with respect to these claims is respectfully requested.

If for any reason the Examiner is unable to allow the application on the next Office Action and feels that an interview would be helpful to resolve any remaining issues, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney for the purpose of arranging such an interview.

Respectfully submitted,


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